

Introduction:

Land policy in India at the time of independence confronted three important issues. First, land was concentrated in the hands of a few with an extremely skewed distribution and there was a proliferation of intermediaries who had least interest in self-cultivation of land. Therefore leasing out land to the landless was a common practice and tenant exploitation was quite prevalent. Second, the tenancy contracts were expropriative in nature and the tenant exploitation was ubiquitously prevalent. Third, the records of land were in extremely bad shape giving rise to large number of litigations. The genesis of these problems emerged in the history land revenue system implemented by Todar Mal during Akbar's rule was the beginning point of land revenue governance in the country. It is very clear that the land administration during British administration emerged on the historical background provided by the Mughal rulers of the country (Baden Powel, 1974, Dutt 1976 and Appu, 1996). Reforms in land policy provided the most needed platform to the Congress Party to rope in rural masses in the freedom struggle. Immediately after independence therefore, Land policy received priority and this was implemented by appointing a Committee under the Chairmanship of late Shri J C Kumarappa. The Committee recommended comprehensive land reforms and that formed the beginning of the changes of land policy in India.

Land policy in India went through five phases and these are characterized by various interventions on behalf of the State. Policy changes, focusing on abolition of intermediaries and the tenancy reforms formed the first step in the history of land. The second phase, though taken almost concurrently but impacting a different a different policy pointer namely land ceiling formed a significant milestone in the shaping land policy in India. The second component of intervention through land policy involved bringing under cultivation the uncultivated lands. This was followed by increased attention towards soil and water conservation as the third component wherein, soil conservation was on the forefront. This was achieved through the watershed development, Drought-prone area development, Desert area development programmes. Waste lands and degraded lands attracted the attention during the fourth phase of the policy and at country level a Waste Land Development agency was established. The current phase of policy debate revolves around the necessity to continue with the land legislations and transparency in land records through computerisation.

This paper attempts to characterise critical issues pertaining to land policy in India beginning with the emergence of the policy in a historical context and from a viewpoint of differential provincial policies. The focus is on the role and development process of land policy in India in the context of overall changes in development policy of the country. It further deals with the political economic aspects of the policy initiatives beginning with the land reforms through its different phases and finally analysing the land development policies of recent origin. The paper incorporates the discussion on closely related goals of poverty elimination, conflict management, sustainable economic growth and good environmental management. Land reforms have been one of the important policy initiatives in India and that brought a sea change in the entire approach towards development policy. The paper also includes the impact of land reforms and the changing phases of land administration in the country. In the final analysis the paper throws open for discussion issues pertaining to the nexus between land policy-poverty and the development initiatives. The sketch of the paper goes as follows.

The paper takes a look at the historical emergence of land policy in India. This is followed by a quick analysis of the major interventions in the land policy domain in terms of land reforms. Here the overall development strategy and land policy nexus is hinted at. Political economic aspects of land policy forms a part of the discussion here. Finally the issues pertaining to conflict management, poverty alleviation and sustainable economic development are addressed to.

Historical Emergence of Land Policy in India

Historically, India's land revenue system emerged from the Mughal rule, the only rulers then who had a control over larger area of the country. Over the years land policy manifested through two different administrative regimes namely the Mughal System and the British Indian administrative system. Therefore, India has a curious admixture of different processes in land administration. Akbar's attempt to replace the

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system of assigning revenue of specified areas to officers as their pay by cash salaries, had a very limited success and totally lapsed during the following regimes. (Dharmakumar (Ed), 1970). Two important players dominated the agrarian relations namely the *ryot* (peasant) and the *Zamindar* (land master) and the State dealt with these to the advantage of optimising revenue. As Sir John Shore explained, "The relation of a *zamindar* to government and of a *ryot* to *zamindar* is neither that of a proprietor nor a vassal but a compound of both. The former performs acts of authority unconnected with property rights. The latter has rights without real property and the property of one and the rights of the other are in a measure held at discretion." (Quoted in Dharmakumar, 1970; p. 13). During the Mughal period land policy was formulated in clear terms, as land was the major source of revenue. Land records were being kept and procedures were set. During those years, the land revenue policy was more synonymous to land policy. The Adilshahi in the Deccan region of the country and the Mughals from Delhi established a systematic network of land revenue collection through various designated officers. *Marathas* followed this system in western India. In the South the kingdom of Vijayanagaram, Mysore State and the governments of Travancore and Cochin had the *Ryotwari* system in line. The system had worked very effectively for quite some time till the British came into power in the country. The British rulers continued with the existing land revenue policy and procedures with a few but significant modifications. British India had typically areas with different agrarian relations and the shades ranged from a complete feudalistic production relations to the *Ryotwari* system (peasant proprietorship). From the north beginning with the Awadh and the *Khalasa* system of land policy in Punjab to the *Zamindari* and *Mirasdari* systems of Central and the *Ryotwari* of the south. Each of these systems dictated a differential emergence of land policy across the country. The provincial land administration structure and the methods of keeping land records reflect this in their differential impact to the implementation of land policy. The Colonial government out of its interest to effectively administer the country, did not make any significant changes in the land revenue system but created a new class of non-cultivating intermediaries. The titles like *Rao Sahab*, *Rao bahadur*, *Zamindar* and *Jagirdars* were conferred and added to the list of existing intermediaries. Daniel Thorner in the analysis of the agrarian structure of India vividly describes the structure as complex of legal, economic and social relations and a multi layer structure that pulled down the production efficiency in agricultural sector. (Thorner and Thorner, 1961). It must be noted that during this period the land policy emerged distinctly across various regions of the country due to existence of princely states and traditional land revenue system. A review of various document reveal various shades of the emergence of land policy in the country across the provinces (states), This indicates a myriad of the agrarian relations in India, varying from peasant proprietorship to a pure land-lord serf kind of relationship. At the time of independence India had a major challenge to set right the agrarian structure as promised during the struggle of independence. Therefore the first task before the first Indian parliament was to address the land policy. Being a densely populated agrarian economy, the developmental initiatives involve land as a central issue and a complex issue as it clearly represented social status and not just the means of production.

Land Policy Changes Across Plan Periods

Immediately after independence and giving the constitution to the country, land policy was taken as first component on the agenda. The Constitution of India categorises three administrative domains namely the State list, Central list and Concurrent list. These assign the policy responsibilities to the States or provinces (State list), with a dialogue between the federal and the state government (concurrent list) and with the Central or federal government (Central list). While recognising the need to bring about land reforms in the country the Constitution of India provided under Article 39 of the Constitution:

- i. That the ownership and control of the material resources of the country should be so distributed as best to serve the common good, and
- ii. That the operation of the economic system does not result in concentration of wealth and means to production to the common detriment.

This particular article of the Indian Constitution was the basis for thinking on the redistribution of land and consequently land reforms in the country. Under the Constitution of India, the States are assigned responsibility for land administration and land reform, whereas, at national policy level the Department of land resources in the central Ministry of Rural Development has a mandate to address land administration.

In India the Planning Commission was set up immediately after the independence in accordance to the Constitution as a policy advisory body to the federal government. Thus most of the policy statements can be found in the various plan documents. Land policy has been one of the important components incorporated in all the plans. The policy statements are sometimes quite explicit and more often implicitly stated. A gist of changes in the land policy as reflected through the various plan documents is given in table 1. Land reform policy was first time spelt out in the First Five-Year Plan. The plan states to reduce the disparities in income and wealth, to eliminate exploitation and to provide security to tenants along with achieving the social

transformation through equality of the status and an opportunity to participate in development initiative to different sections of population.

Table 1: Land Policy formulation through Planning Period

Plan Period	Major Issue	Policy Thrust
First Plan 1951-56	Area under cultivation to be increased. Community Development (CD) networks to take care of the village commons. Vast uncultivated lands locked under large sizes of holdings.	Land Reforms to bring in the fallow under cultivation and increase land use efficiency. Tenant to be given the rights to cultivate land. Abolition of intermediaries.
Second Plan 1956-61	Concern about vast rainfed agriculture, low land productivity and thrust on irrigated agriculture.	Soil conservation as an important programme. First phase of land reform implementation. Irrigation Development for the rainfed areas. Training and Extension work for the technology through CD.
Third Plan 1961-66	Food security concern dominated. Cultivable waste land to be brought under cultivation. Bringing the lagging regions under main stream growth.	Area development as an approach. Intensive area development programme adopted for selected districts. An integrated land policy approach was inherent. Soil Surveys were taken up.
Fourth Plan 1969-74	Emphasis on food security continued as minimum dietary requirements to be met. Incentives were created for diversion of land towards food crops and enhancing the capacity of such land. Domination of large holding sizes and low allocative and technical efficiency.	Increased emphasis on irrigation and soil conservation in dry-land regions and technological change introduced. Higher cropping intensity was the concern. Second phase of land reforms with land ceiling acts and consolidation of holding. Institutional changes brought in.
Fifth Plan 1974-79	Problems of degradation land management in irrigated command areas surfaced. Drought prone areas attracted attention	Drought prone area development, Desert area development programmes, and soil conservation were on and further enhanced. New impetus to dry farming.
Sixth Plan 1980-85	Under-utilisation of land resources. Drought prone areas continued to attract attention. Attention lagging areas on the backdrop of green revolution required cultivation.	Land and water management programme under drought-prone area programme in selected areas.
Seventh Plan 1985-90	Soil erosion and land degradation surfaced as major issues. Land going out of cultivation. Deforestation and degradation of forest lands.	Soil and Water Conservation and averting land degradation. Specific attention to degraded lands. Wastelands Development programmes. Long term view of land management.
Eighth Plan 1992-97	Dry land and rainfed areas requiring attention. Degradation of land in Irrigated command areas. Peoples' participation surfaced as major issue in land management at village level.	Emphasis on watershed approach. Soil conservation merged with watershed programmes. Agro-climatic regional planning approach incorporated.
Ninth Plan 1997-2002	Land degradation increased significantly. Integrating Watershed Development Programme across various components. Rethinking on land reforms. Gap between potentials and actual crop yields need to be bridged. Need for a long term policy document.	Bringing the under-utilised land under cultivation. Management of waste lands. Maintenance of village commons. Decentralised land management system. <i>Panchayat raj</i> institutions to manage the village lands. Rethinking on land legislations
Tenth Plan	Pressure on Land increased, Marginalisation of Size of Holding, Rainfed Agriculture required Policy priority, Issues in maintaining Land Records, Environmental Issues.	Bringing uncultivated land under cultivation and Economic Use, Increase in Cropping Intensity, Integrated Watershed Development, Emphasis on Forestry, Ownership and Institutional Framework, e-governance.

Source: From various plan documents. These are not however exhaustive statements but only indicative of the thrust. The gaps in the plan periods were annual plans and full plan documents could not be prepared for these gaps due to various reasons.

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There are three significant changes that mark the land policy sector in India. Though the theme changed during the five decades the core issues remained revolving round a just distribution of land resources. Land reforms and community development came more or less together and these interventions were meant to provide means of production to the millions of poor who were either lacked resources or did not have know-how to use them. Initially policy was focussed more on bringing under efficient cultivation the land that was left unused and took away the rights of land of the intermediaries who held large share of the land resources. Close on the heels were the tenancy reforms that began on the hypothesis of 'tenant efficiency' and an expected increase in the capital formation. In addition to these economic goals, the tenancy reforms were taken as an intervention to provide the right to land to the tenant who were always at a receiving end. Thus abolition of intermediaries and tenancy reforms were the first phase reforms. The ceiling on land holding followed this on holdings. These were addressed to reduce the concentration of wealth in the

hands of few and providing means of living to others. Second important intervention came in the form of the area-based programmes like Drought-prone area Programme and Desert Development Programme. Both the programmes focussed on building the land resources in these ecologically fragile regions and to provide employment opportunities to the inhabitants. The third important land policy intervention came from the policy emphasis on soil and water conservation through a massive watershed development programme. This programme succeeded the Wasteland Development Programme that intended to restore the ecology and environment in drought prone areas.

Land Reforms as an Intervention to deal with Poverty

Raj Krishna grouped land reform measures based on the theme and implementation of reforms into four groups namely liberative, distributive, organisational and developmental reforms. The liberative measures aimed at the emancipation of the actual tillers of the land from the burden of the landlord. This was to be achieved by conferring the land title on the tenant. The distributive measures on the other hand were meant to achieve this by providing the material resources to the poor as promised by the Constitution of India and especially those who required land as a productive resource. The organisational reforms aimed at choosing and setting in place a particular form of agricultural production organisation (Raj Krishna, 1961). All these three taken together form a part of distributive and development images that were taken immediately after the independence in the country. Even though this was written almost at the beginning of the first phase of land reforms the description aptly gives a clear theoretical view of the reforms that followed.

Immediately after the independence four important components of land reforms were thought of as major policy interventions in building the land policy. These included i. Abolition of intermediaries; ii. Tenancy reforms; iii. Fixing of ceiling on land holding; iv. Consolidation of holding. These were taken in phases as the ground preparation and the political will was to be built for their wider acceptance. By 1960 the whole process of legal enactment of the abolition of intermediaries was completed. This has been the most successful components of the reform process. The discrepancy between the ownership and operational holding was a major malady of Indian agriculture. The problem can be seen from the trends in operational holdings of major land holding classes presented in annexure table 1 and the Lorenz ratios presented in annexure table 2. At the time of independence it was felt that conferment of ownership on the tenant would be an important intervention to avoid tenants' exploitation. It was felt necessary as this would increase employment, consumption standards and enhance the market participation of the poor tenants.

The major aspects of tenancy reforms included security of tenure, termination of tenancy, resumption for personal cultivation by the landlord, regulation of rent, and confirmation of ownership rights. Various state laws were enacted between 1960 and 1972. These differed across the states and territories. Owing to the diverse and complicated nature of social and agrarian structure in the countryside, no uniform guidelines could be formulated for the country. However, some broad guidelines were given in addition to the directives given in the successive plan documents. The consensus on the policy of tenancy reforms favoured neither complete expropriation of landlordism nor favoured interest of the tenants. In the national guidelines the following measures were communicated to the state governments for incorporating in the State level legislation:

- Security of the tenancy to be conferred on the actual cultivator.
- Fair rent to be fixed between 1/4th and 1/5th of the gross produce.
- Landowners may be permitted to cultivate land for the personal use.
- The surrender of the tenancy rights with mutual consent.
- In respect of some of the area, the landlord tenant nexus to be ended and the tenant cultivator be brought directly under the contact with the state.
- The disabled persons, the defense personnel and such exemptions be provided.
- The term personal cultivation be clearly defined if land were to be resumed for cultivation.
- The correct the record of tenancy and abolishing oral tenancy all together.

The ultimate step in security of tenure was to confer ownership rights on the tenants from a specified date. Some states declared the tenants as deemed to be owners on the payment of the reasonable price fixed as compensation to the owner as fixed earlier. In Maharashtra the tillers' day was declared on 1st April 1957.

Among the various exceptions given under the tenancy act the resumption for personal cultivation assumed greater importance as the dominant landlords took advantage of this clause. The clause was entered with a view to induce the landlord to undertake personal cultivation and also to control the absentee landlordism this clause was introduced. Tenancy acts in almost all the states allowed the landlord to resume lands for personal cultivation but the definitions were different. The National policy recommended

that residence of the owner/ member of his family must be one of the essential conditions for personal cultivation. Some of the States like Maharashtra and Karnataka have provided that besides staying in the village the principal source of income should be from the produce of the land. In some of the States right to resumption also relates to the economic status of the landlord. Like those paying Income Tax are not eligible to resume cultivation. Family Holding, economic holding and basic holding differ from State to State. How much land should be left with the tenant after resumption of cultivation also differs from State to State. The time limit for resuming cultivation and the consequences of not cultivating also differ across States (See table 2). But all these could be utilised by the landlord to their advantage. Similar misuse by the landlords was feared about the surrender clause. A tenant can surrender the land to the landlord at his/her will. In most of the States the surrender of land falls in the jurisdiction of the revenue authorities. The authorities allowed such surrender after verification of the voluntary element in the process. The surrender clause also made a strong nexus between the landlords and the revenue officials (Deshpande, 1999). Punjab, Kerala, Tripura and Telangana did not provide for any surrender by the tenant. A few of these provided surrender to the State and not to the landlord operated through Revenue authorities. Tenants were also provided right to purchase the land as in Maharashtra, where tenancy is not prohibited but the tenant acquires right to purchase the land after one year from the date of tenancy.

The regulation of rent was an important aspect before enacting the legislations. The prevailing rents differed across the states in the country. The National policy recommended that fair rent payable by a tenant shall be subject to mutual agreement that should be limited to 20 to 25 percent of the produce. Individual States recalculated this for the purpose of their legislations. It differed across states and in some of the States it is related to the land revenue and in others it is related to the value of produce. The level of rent should be allowed to be decided by the supply and demand conditions in the land use market.

The tenancy legislations also provided for the termination of tenancy under various circumstances. The common feature of the laws provide termination of tenancy on five grounds viz. : i. Tenant has failed to pay rent for the year within the time stipulated in the law, ii. The land is used for the purpose other than agriculture; iii. The land is made unfit for cultivation; iv. Failed to cultivate personally; v. The term of lease period is over or the landlord has resumed the land for personal cultivation.

India being a federal country and Constitution of India assigned the Land Policy as a State subject, the land policy differed across States. Variations across the states differ in due to the concept terminology and agrarian relations. As stated earlier that the States emerged out of the erstwhile provinces and princely States in British India and the influence of the production relations prevailing then and the relationship with British Government of these States dictated the land relations. These find a clear reflection in the enactment of Land Reform legislations across States. We have given the differences in the tenancy act in table 2.

There are variations and interesting exceptions across States. Tenancy is completely prohibited in some States whereas it is completely free in a few others. There are examples of clearly conferring the land rights on the tenant cultivator like in Maharashtra, whereas West Bengal chose to confer the tenancy rights on the *Bargadar*. There are again areas where even within a State there are more than one domain of Tenancy as in Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh and Marathawada region of Maharashtra. Orissa law considers a rayat owning less than 3 standard acres of land as a disabled person. In Rajasthan a student pursuing studies in an educational institution and having age less than 25 years is also a disabled person. In Uttar Pradesh such student is disabled if his father is dead. In Uttar Pradesh all minors, women and unmarried daughters are not treated as disabled but whose husband or father is dead are treated as disabled. In Bihar a public servant whose salary is below the given norm is treated as disabled. Punjab and Haryana have not prohibited tenancy whereas Karnataka has a complete ban on tenancy. The most controversial and debated provision of the tenancy reforms has been the complete ban on land lease market. The National Commission on Agriculture stated that under the present man land ratio tenancy as such could not be totally banned. Experience and field studies have shown that wherever this ban. Gujarat State is a step ahead and it has not only banned tenancy but leasing out land is an offence and punishable by a fine of Rs. 1000. In Karnataka soldiers and seamen are exempted, as is the case in most of the States. It is interesting that all these restrictions have given rise to a refractory tenancy market. Concealed tenancy and reverse tenancy have proliferated as new forms of tenancy (Nadkarni, 1976).

Table 2: Variations in Tenancy laws across Major Indian States

Sl No.	State	Specific Features
1	Andhra Pradesh	In Andhra Pradesh leasing is permitted but regulated. In Telangana region leasing out land by large holders is prohibited. Smallholdings below three family holdings are allowed to lease out land for a period of five years. Exemptions are provided.
2	Assam	There are no restrictions on leasing out of land.
3	Bihar	Leasing out is prohibited except for persons with disability. Public servants with a salary not exceeding Rs. 250 are included under exempt category.
4	Gujarat	Leasing is prohibited and unauthorised leasing is punishable offence with a fine up to Rs. 1000.
5	Karnataka	Leasing is prohibited. Certain exemptions are allowed to lease out. Recent amendments allow leasing in with certain exemptions.
6	Maharashtra	No ban on tenancy, but the tenant acquires the right to purchase the land within one year of the commencement of tenancy.
7	Madhya Pradesh	Abolished the past leases but not the future leases. Past leases are divided in to two categories called Bhumiswami tenant without payment and other tenant with payment. They cultivate on terms and conditions agreed between parties. Other land owners can lease out their lands for one year during consecutive period of three years.
8	Orissa	Prohibited all future leases. Past leases continue after surrendering half of the leased land to the landlord or rayat.
9	Punjab and Haryana	There is no ban on leasing and the tenants do not acquire any rights on land.
10	Rajasthan	The landowners (<i>Khatedar</i>) can lease out for a non-renewable period of five years. <i>Ghair Khatedar</i> tenants can sub-lease for a period of one year.
11	Tamil Nadu	Leasing is permitted but the law stipulates that every contract should be in written form and in triplicate. A copy of the document shall be deposited with the revenue officials
12	Uttar Pradesh	Lease for any period is prohibited. Exemptions allowed.
13	West Bengal	There is no restriction on leasing. A tenant lawfully cultivating others' land is called <i>Bargadar</i> . The leased right is heritable. On resumption the <i>Bargadar</i> has to be left with 1 hectare of land. Nor the landowner can have land held for personal cultivation more than 3 hectares.

On record the enactment of tenancy legislations between 1962-1977 have yielded exemplary results. This resulted in a dramatic fall in the area under tenancy from 23.34 percent during the year 1952-53 to 10.7 percent during the year 1961-62 and further down to 7.2 percent in 1982. This settled down to 8 percent by 1991 as revealed by 48th NSS round (see table 3). The tenancy laws helped only a small percentage of tenants acquiring land but it had undoubtedly helped in sharp fall under tenancy. Of course it gave rise to reverse tenancy and concealed tenancy. The question of concealed tenancy has been debated and it is recorded that anywhere between 15 to 25 percent tenancies in the country is illegal and concealed. NSS data shows that informally leasing of land is dominated by smaller marginal farmers will make the majority of the lessors. More than 80 percent of the leased in land is held by this group of farmers. Since the tenancy is oral and share croppers are weak both economically and politically they rarely get their due. They only have a tenuous hold on the land that they cultivate and invariably they have the hand over the land to the owner at any time he demands as well as a share of the produce or money rent.

In the present context, tenancy in India should be seen as a mechanism of resource adjustment, access to credit institutions and credit system, sharing of risk and entrepreneurship, avoiding transaction costs, leasing out by the poor in favour of others if it becomes difficult to invest capital, and leading out the distant plots which are difficult to cultivate. It can be seen from the 1990-91 agricultural Census of the country that highest share of tenancy contracts are on the basis of fixed money rent and share of produce. Thus secured from the point of view of the tenant as well as the land owner (annexure table 3)

Table 3: Changes in Leasing of Land in India: 1961 to 1991.

Sl No	Farm category	(Percent of total)							
		1961 - 62		1970 - 71		1980 - 81		1990 - 91	
		No of Holdings	Area	No of Holdings	Area	No of Holdings	Area	No of Holdings	Area
1	Marginal	24.1	16.6	27.0	18.9	14.4	9.7	9.3	8.7
2	Small	25.1	14.0	27.8	14.6	17.9	8.5	14.9	8.5
3	Semi-Medium	23.6	11.7	24.8	11.7	15.9	7.3	12.2	7.4
4	Medium	20.5	9.6	20.9	8.7	14.5	6.6	13.1	6.9
5	Large	19.5	8.3	15.9	5.9	11.5	5.3	16.7	11.4
6	All Sizes	23.5	10.7	25.7	10.6	15.2	7.2	11.0	8.3

Source: National Sample Survey Organisation of India, Report No 407 of 48th Round, 1995 pp. 28-29.

Among the changes in land lease market that have been seen in the last 30 years six components assume significant importance. First, the period of lease that used to be lifelong has been reduced and in the States in which leasing operations are legal the period of lease has been less than three years. However, a large part of the lease operations are undercover. Second, earlier there used to be little or no supervision by

the landlord of the leased land. This has increased as a result of the fear of tenant occupancy and the landlord tenant relations have become stronger in terms of resource sharing and cost sharing. Third, The share of landowner in the investment used to be negligible but that has increased substantially due to technological inputs. Four, the rent that used to be fixed by the landlord has been regulated in a few States. In a few other states where tenancy is undercover, the landlord fixes the rent and this can be from 50 to 85 percent of the produce. Five, during the early years of independence the tenant was exploited and rarely identified himself with the land that he cultivated, however now the tenant identifies himself with the land. Thus tenant cultivator's production efficiency might be higher when compared with the owner cultivator. Six, prior to the land reforms, the productivity on the tenanted land used to be low however now the tenant has been taking enough interest due to the access to the technology, the productivity on tenanted land is more of less equivalent or more than that on the own land.

Ceilings on Agricultural Holdings

The land distribution at the time of independence was extremely skewed and 53 percent land was held by 7 percent large holdings, whereas 28 percent of sub-marginal and marginal holdings owned about 6 percent area (See Annexure table 6). The land distribution across the States was quite skewed and that can be seen from the Lorenz ratios of 1952-53 (See Annexure table 5). The ceiling on land holding was felt essential out of three economic compulsions. First, there was a strong argument about inverse size-productivity relationship. Thereby hinting that the aggregate production efficiency gets hampered due to land locked under large holdings. Second, it was believed and supported by evidence that large holders of land leave large fallows thereby perpetuating uneconomic land use. Third, large proportion of the population was land-based poor who wanted to have land as an economic resource for their livelihood. The surplus land could be distributed to such poor people. Finally the general position in favour of the ceiling was based only on the concentration of social justice and equity and not on the grounds of increasing production and developing agriculture. Ceilings on agricultural holdings were enacted in two phases. The first phase was 1960-72 and the second phase began in 1972. The second phase was more radical in its content when compared with the first phase.

The loopholes that existed in the first phase of legislations were corrected during the second phase. Among the major loop holes that existed in the ceiling acts of various states included the high ceiling limits, retrospective transfers, large number of exemptions, and the basis of fixation of ceiling limits. The national guidelines were prepared during the Chief Minister's conference held in July 1972. This was followed by a set of guidelines. Consequent to the formation of the national guidelines all the state modified or enacted their own laws. Among various factors that featured the debate were the definitions of family, transfers, standard holding, ceiling limits and exempted categories. All these matters intended to simplify the process in effect complicated the implementation.

The state legislations more or less conformed to the national guidelines so far as fixation of the ceiling limits and distillation of surplus land are concerned. We can see from the table that the ceiling limits conform to the National guidelines but differ across states (table 4). A few significant issues featured after the 1970s phase of land reforms.

Table 4: Ceiling Limits on Land Holdings of Different States

States	(In hectares)		
	Irrigated land with two crop	Irrigated land with one crop	Dry land
Andhra Pradesh	4.05 to 7.28	6.07-10.93	14.16-21.85
Assam	6.74	6.47	6.74
Bihar	6.07 to 7.28	10.12	12.14-18.21
Gujarat	4.05 -7.28	6.07-10.93	8.09-21.85
Haryana	7.25	10.9	21.8
Himachal Pradesh	4.05	6.07	12.14-28.83
Jammu&Kashmir	3.6-5.06		5.95-9.20
Karnataka	4.05-8.10	10.12-12.14	21.85
Kerala	4.86-6.07	4.86-6.07	4.86-6.07
Madhya Pradesh	7.28	10.93	21.85
Maharashtra	7.08	10.93	21.85
Manipur	5	5	6
Orissa	4.05	6.07	12.14-18.21
Punjab	7	11	20.5
Rajasthan	7.28	10.93	21.85-70.82
Tamil nadhu	4.86	12.14	24.28

Sikkim	5.06		20.23
Tripura	4	4	12
Uttar Pradesh	7.3	10.95	18.25
West Bengal	5	5	7
Ceiling Suggested in National Guidelines of 1972	4.05-7.28	10.93	21.85

Source: Agricultural Statistics at a glance-2001, Ministry of agriculture and Cooperation, Govt of India, New Delhi

The National Commission on Agriculture held that any attempt to lower the ceiling limits might further create uncertainty in the mind of the middle and large farmers that may undermine the production. More than that the demographic pressures will reduce the size of holding in the top brackets whereas at the bottom this pressure will lead to marginalisation of holdings. Many analysts of Indian land market situation have noted that the process of marginalisation is sharply increasing in the country, proliferating the economically non-viable tiny holdings. In a recent study on the causes of farmers' suicides in Karnataka it was noted that the land size has been fast declining and it becomes insufficient to economically sustain a farm family (Deshpande, 2002). The first five-year plan also suggested the concept of economics holding which was then about 2 standard acres for self-cultivation. The Maharashtra law defined the economic holding as four permanently irrigated acres. But presently more than 60 percent of the holding fall under marginal and sub-marginal land holding with less than 1 hectare operational holding. It must be underscored that during 1961-62 this proportion was only 47 per cent recording an increase of 13 percent.

Table 5: Position about Distribution of Ceiling Surplus Land across States: 2000

State	Area Declared Surplus as a % of Net Operated Area	Per cent of land to be Distributed but Involved in litigation		Distributable Surplus Land as a % of Net Operated Area	Surplus area Actually Distributed as a % of Net Operated Area
		Mid-95	March 2000		
Andhra Pradesh	3.02	66.50	76.29	0.80	2.21
Assam	8.92	33.48	18.35	1.87	7.05
Bihar	2.30	98.93	100.00	0.59	1.71
Gujarat	0.96	85.27	81.03	0.37	0.59
Haryana	1.21	65.74	85.43	0.06	1.15
Himachal Pradesh	22.55	0.003	2.28	22.23	0.31
Karnataka	1.04	85.76	88.98	0.57	0.47
Kerala	2.48	38.19	36.52	1.48	1.00
Madhya Pradesh	0.61	35.39	70.86	0.23	0.38
Maharashtra	1.69	21.56	31.97	0.21	1.47
Orissa	1.16	52.55	50.78	0.15	1.02
Punjab	2.18	100.00	20.72	1.16	1.03
Rajasthan	1.49	43.04	52.20	0.37	1.12
Tamil Nadu	1.51	67.71	44.41	0.17	1.35
Tripura	0.29	-	14.86	0.06	0.23
Uttar Pradesh	0.87	43.01	43.58	0.27	0.62
West Bengal	10.13	55.08	59.35	2.43	7.71
All-India	2.09	50.07	50.97	0.59	1.51

Source: Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, 2001

The entire emphasis of Ceiling on land holding was to detect surplus land which was above economic holding size, acquire that and redistribute it among the landless who require such economic base. However, among the measures taken for efficient utilisation of land resources this redistribution component failed on these counts. Acquiring the surplus land was not effective and as the acquisition was meagre the distribution was also insignificant. This failure was mainly due to the associated political process and the village level politicisation of the issue. The nexus between the bureaucrats and politicians fuelled this. A government document accepts that "It is widely recognised that the chief reason for the poor implementation of land reforms has been the lack of political will. It would not be surprising to expect so, if we appreciate the realities of the rural situation and development of Indian politics" (quoted in Rao, 1990). Even the micro level studies noted that land tribunals' functioning was not very transparent and doubts were raised about the functioning of the non-official members (Thimmaiah and Aziz, 1983). The surplus land distributed does not form even 2 percent of the total net operated area. Despite the limited success in redistribution of surplus agricultural land (see table 5), ceiling laws have succeeded in keeping a check on concentration of land in the hands of a few. Large number of experts now agree that implementation of ceiling laws especially possession and redistribution of surplus land is no longer an option of engendering social equity.

Consolidation of Holding

Among the land reforms the consolidation of holdings received least attention both due to the time of the intervention and political process through which it went. During early seventies it was felt that one holder may have several fragments scattered across the revenue villages in the vicinity or at long distances in the same village. This was an easy escape from the Land Ceiling Act and therefore it was felt that land holding of an individual holder should be consolidated. The legislation on consolidation was attempted in order to reduce inefficiency in operation and cultivation but failed to achieve that due to lack of political will and administrative difficulties. The legislation was a difficult piece to formulate and did not consider the ground reality of Caste within the farming communities and local process of politicisation.

Table 6: Progress of Consolidation Work in India

State	Share of Cultivable Area(%)	Percentage of Area Consolidated to planned Area			
		1974	1980	1985	2000
Andhra Pradesh	8.78	2.29	2.29	-	2.22
Assam	1.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	-
Bihar	6.53	2.60	-	10.59	38.02
Gujarat	6.27	10.92	14.58	18.85	27.30
Haryana	2.13	-	-	83.20	100.00
Kerala	1.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	-
Karnataka	7.03	8.13	8.00	-	8.92
Maharashtra	11.78	46.97	-	77.02	100.00
Madhya Pradesh	12.53	16.06	16.11	-	18.17
Orissa	4.31	0.00	22.57	47.33	15.97
Punjab	2.43	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Rajasthan	6.91	0.68	-	6.18	8.32
Uttar Pradesh	11.38	58.59	-	76.45	100.00
West Bengal	3.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	-
All-India		22.28	30.20	34.00	39.81

Sources: Government of India, Report of the National Commission on Agriculture, 1976, Part XV, Agrarian Reforms, pp. 348-49. Studies on Land Reforms, Ministry of Agriculture (Dept. of Agr. And Coopn.), Government of India. The figures for 2000 have been obtained from the Reports of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.

It can be seen that except for Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh the programme has not made any impact. Although legislative provisions for the consolidation have already been made in 15 states, yet it provided sufficient room to escape. For example, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal provide only for voluntary consolidation; it is more or less similar in Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Maharashtra. Given the importance and the extremely unsatisfactory results of this programme, it is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of the legislations and need to think an institutional solution.

Approaches to Land Policy

Land and agricultural administration are independent departments both at the federal as well as at the provincial government levels. In one way, this helps to monitor the land use under non-agricultural purposes separately from agriculture but at the same time lack of integration between these two creates uneasy administrative regimes. There are a few departments that look into the land administration, land data, and land legislation. Unfortunately, these do not work in perfect co-ordination and therefore give rise to different problems. Land and agricultural administration are separate wings of the government. This spread of administrative regimes makes decision making difficult and the land policy implementation has this as one of the main problems to confront with.

The Department of Land Resources in the Central Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment has the responsibility to address the issues pertaining to land administration, particularly issues related to degraded lands, and has a range of programmes that set the national framework. These programmes include quite a few activities. The department works as an advisory and co-ordinating body for the implementation of land reforms, and helps in arriving at a consensus among States on the changing the emphasis in land reform. The department also issues guidelines for strengthening of Revenue Administration and the updating of the land records. The department also initiated various activities focused on wastelands (drought prone areas, desert development, integrated wastelands development, technology development, extension and training, investment promotion and support for NGOs/Vos for such activities). Recently the Department of Land Resources convened a workshop entitled 'Whither Tenancy' at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie in September 1999. This workshop drew together a group of experts on land reform to review the current situation in land policy. The question of opening of the leasing market was

debated and there was a strong feeling the leasing of land should be legalised. However, no firm decisions were made in the workshop. But subsequently National Agricultural Policy first time focussed on the policy of leasing and suggested opening of the leasing operations, increase the size of holdings for land ceiling and allow contract farming. In another move of setting right the land records, recently a programme of computerisation of land records was taken up across the country.

Computerization of Land Records

In the country it is now an accepted fact that recording of land rights, and their periodic updating is an essential prerequisite for an effective land policy. It was during the Seventh Plan Period (1997-98) a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Computerization of Land Records (CLR) was introduced with 100 percent financial assistance from the Central government as a pilot project in a few districts viz ; Gulbarga (Karnataka), Rangareddy (A.P), Sonitpur (Assam), Singhbhum (Bihar), Gandhinagar(Gujarat), Morena (M.P), Wardha (Maharashtra), Mayurbhanj (Orissa) and Dungarpur (Rajasthan) with a view to removing the problems inherent in the manual maintenance and updating of land records and to ensure the issue of timely and accurate copies of record of right to land owners by the Tahsildar. The main objectives of the Scheme were: i. Computerization of ownership and plot-wise details for issue of timely and accurate copy of the Records of Rights (RoR) to the land owners, ii. To achieve low cost, easily reproducible storage media for reliable preservation for long time. iii. To provide fast and efficient retrieval of information, both graphical and textual. iv. Creation of a Land Information System (LIS) and data base for Agricultural Census.

By the end of the Eighth Plan, 323 districts in the country were to be brought under the scheme. During the first year of the Ninth Plan i.e. 1997-98, 177 new project districts were covered. The available feedback from our field work and other sources clearly points towards a slow progress of the scheme. Many bottlenecks are also emerging in the process. Some of these are: delayed transfer of funds to the final implementing authority in the field by the state governments, delay in development of appropriate software as per the specific requirements of different states, lack of adequate training facilities to the revenue staff in the field areas who handle computers, and non-availability of private vendors for taking up the job of data entry. In addition to these the system of administration of the computerisation has not been clearly set up. It is operated under the Revenue department and some times with partly trained staff. Therefore a quantum change in this process is needed.

Land: Poverty and Policy Issues

In the present context it is very clear that the small and marginal farmers cannot compete either in the domestic market or in the foreign market. The competition is hampered due to the crop they produce on their farms as well as due to the market imperfections and availability of information to them. In this context, many analysts argue that there has not been level playing field for the farmers of India vis a vis the farmers of the western world. Among other things that inhibits the farmers to compete in the world market the size of land holding, size of production and market imperfections are the important factors. It is difficult for the small and marginal farmers to grow the commodities that have good demand in the world market mainly because of the high cost of cultivation of such commodities as well as the limited know-how available across the shelf about such commodities. In order to overcome this problem it is essential to create the larger size of entrepreneurs groups so that such groups can take the risk of entering into competition and grow the crops and commodities which have better demand both in domestic as well as in the world market.

The nexus between the land policy initiatives and growth is quite clear. Though one cannot implicate one to one correspondence between land policy and growth the available evidence is significant enough to suggest such nexus. India's rural population being land based the development scenario as well as the poverty issues are closely associated with land policy. A paper by Besley and Burgess gave a robust evidence of a link between poverty reduction due to tenancy reforms and abolition of intermediaries. They also inferred that land reforms also benefited the landless (Besley and Burgess, 2000). Rao underscores the goal of land policy as means to allow and promote the emergence of a viable and modernised small and marginal farmers and providing sufficient leverage to the landless to enter the farming sector as cultivators (Rao, 1990). Therefore, land policy though seems distanced from the direct impact on the rural poverty, has a significant influence on it.

The poor in rural India are located mostly among the landless agricultural labourers, marginal and small farmers. In a cross section analysis of the states in India, the empirical data suggest that marginalisation is on fast increase. The trends differ across the regions in the country, as also between social groups and it is clearly visible that the land-based poor are becoming poorer due to the process of marginalisation. I have made use of empirical data across the states in the country to buttress these points and to bring forth land policy-poverty nexus.

Table 8: Policy Interventions and Their Perceived Impact

Policy Interventions	Poverty Alleviation	Conflict Management/ Equity	Environmental Management	Sustainable Economic Growth	Production Efficiency
Abolition of Intermediaries	Sig	Sig	Par	Sig	Sig
Tenancy Reforms	Sig	Sig	Neg	Par	Sig
Ceiling on Size of Holding	Sig	Sig	Neg	Sig	Par
Consolidation of Holdings	Neg	Neg	Par	Par	Sig
Computerisation of Land Records	Neg	Sig	Neg	Neg	Par
Drought prone Area Development Programme and Desert Development Programme	Neg	Neg	Sig	Sig	Par
Waste Land Development	Par	Neg	Sig	Sig	Rar

Note: Impact levels are perceived as Sig - Significant, Par - Partial, Neg - Negligible

The policy interventions in India's Land Policy during the last five decades were viewed from the point of view of their impact on various parameters. These were looked from the point of view of the impact on alleviation of poverty, conflict management and equity, sustainable economic development, environmental impact and production efficiency. It was seen that the interventions have varying impact across the States and depending on the agrarian situation.

Among the policy options discussed in the recent past rolling back land ceiling laws assumed prominence. It is argued that the ceiling limits do not provide for a viable land size for a family. It is questioned that as there are no limits on investment in other sectors, why agriculturist should face a restriction on increasing the size of holding. Economically viable size of holding is the crux of present crisis. But given the present political and administrative climate in the country rolling back the land ceiling act seems to be a difficult political option. Where efficiency of small and large farms is found more or less equal, it is necessary to allow size of holding which can generate the investable capital in agriculture sector. It is possible to achieve this through pulling the smaller holdings to form formal/ informal groups of producers and contract out their produce for the purpose of markets. The second policy option discussed strongly in a countrywide debate is the desirability of making legal the agricultural tenancy and renting in land. Among the arguments put forth the pro-poor impact of legalising the tenancy has gained a good ground. It is felt that majority of the beneficiaries will be smaller marginal farmers. Presently there is no protection to the tenant as well as to the landlord. More than that the tenant cannot attain required capital from banks and financial institutions. In a recent study addressed to the investigation of the causes of suicides it was found that a good number of farmers who committed suicide had rented in land and could not borrow from the regular financial institutions as the land was not legally tenanted. They borrowed from moneylenders and could not pay back due to heavy interest rates. (Deshpande, 2002). Legalising tenancy bring the small and marginal tenants in the ambit of the institutional credit. If the status of the tenant is conferred on the tenant it may not leave any room for the land market imperfections. It is expected that opening of the lease market will bring in the private investment in agriculture that has been hitherto a major problem. It is possible to keep out the possible imperfections by restricting the upper limit to the 25 hectares and imposing time limit on the lease period say for three years. Apart from this leasing in land belonging to the weaker sections should be regulated with proper intervening authority. Survey of lands and proper delineation is also high on the agenda. Among the immediate policy interventions the drive to correct and computerise the land records assumes importance. Legalising tenancy and relaxing the ceilings on land holding assumes next priority. Land degradation and treatment of degraded forestland as well as the wastelands are another important component. This is being taken up by the Waste Land Development agency but the achievements are not significant.

Table 9: Suggested Policy Interventions

Problem Confronted	Suggested Intervention
Land titles are presumptive and the record keeping allows a good amount of discrepancies. This gives rise to legal disputes and a large number of cases are pending in various courts and tribunals.	Land titles guaranteeing by the State. Suggestion regarding the Torrens System may work better. Keeping of land records needs to be improved. These are presently maintained on old and fragile papers. Implementation of a major-long-term project to systematically clarify rights in land.
Computerisation of Land records	The scheme has been taken up in selected districts but the progress is so slow that it may take a decade to cover all the districts. It will also be difficult to operate the scheme in some of the districts.
Land Surveys have not been conducted over decades. That makes the land records extremely undependable. The survey work is huge and needs good amount of resources.	Land survey can be conducted with the help of private institutions.
The desirability of making legal the agricultural tenancy and	As it is the concealed tenancy and reverse tenancy is prevalent.

renting in land.	These are more exploitative in nature and therefore there is a strong case for legalizing tenancy in the regions where it is prohibited. This will help the poor and reduce exploitation through concealed tenancy.
Marginalisation of Holdings. Land productivity is going down and the dependence on chemical fertilisers is increasing. The process of marginalisation of holding is adding to the existing lot of poor.	It is necessary to revisit the land-ceiling act and locate economic holding in different regions. In addition to this land consolidation needs to be taken up so as to combine the tiny fragmented holdings. Suggested changes in the law of inheritance.
Extremely negligible presence of women cultivators and owners of land	Daughters to have right on the inherited property and the surrender of such right to be registered in the presence of revenue officials.
Cultivable Waste, Other Fallows and public Waste lands that come under Common Property Resources need to be brought under environmental friendly and sustainable land use.	Use rights (tenant rights) of such lands may be given to the landless agricultural laboureres with a know-how and plan to use such lands economically.
Alarming increase in the degradation of forest lands under legal ownership of the forest department.	Such lands could be used for the purpose of growing non-timber forest products and other forest products that have substantial value added. These lands could be leased out to land less agricultural workers interested in bringing them under use. Tree <i>Pattas</i> (right to harvest the produce of the trees) to be granted to the forest dwellers was suggested by various committees. This needs to be implemented.
Land related laws in India are numerous and do not even form the same theme. There are number of complications that emerge out of these legal documents.	A review of the entire legal frame governing land is essential. Five decades of legal experience should help in properly designing the system

Conclusions

The analysis of the emergence of land policy in India went through different phases. These included land reforms in its two stages, bringing in the lagging area under main stream growth through drought prone area programme, desert development programme. This was followed by Wasteland Development Programme that was environmentally designed to reclaim the degraded land. All these policy interventions had a significant influence on poverty and overall development process of the country. In addition to these, other land policy instruments were used for the purpose of sharpening the policy. In the table above we have indicated the key areas for the purpose of action and major policy interventions required. Among the key areas for action the land requires, legalising the tenancy market, contract farming, and wasteland development assume greater significance. The implementation issues relate to the political economic aspects of these reform measures and setting right the institutions for the purpose of achieving these. It is strongly felt that research should be directed towards locating the institutional framework in order to get these issues into a broader policy frame.

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Annexure Tables

Table 1: Trends in Distribution of Operational Holdings in Rural
India: Major States

(Area % to total)

States	Year	Sub-Marginal Holdings	Marginal Holdings	Large Holdings
Andhra Pradesh	1953-54	1.53	6.25	49.37
	1971-72	1.78	7.50	42.78
	1991-92	2.96	14.58	21.41
Assam	1953-54	1.18	4.77	21.49
	1971-72	3.65	17.98	4.82
	1991-92	7.50	26.74	5.28
Bihar	1953-54	3.02	8.82	25.24
	1971-72	4.47	13.69	15.76
	1991-92	8.27	20.74	11.62
Gujarat	1953-54	0.26	1.72	72.22
	1971-72	0.54	2.08	62.80
	1991-92	1.29	5.82	44.27
Karnataka	1953-54	0.43	2.99	58.07
	1971-72	0.39	4.71	46.25
	1991-92	1.12	8.44	34.76
Kerala	1953-54	9.08	18.66	22.64
	1971-72	17.33	22.71	6.85
	1991-92	23.24	30.03	4.63
Madya Pradesh	1953-54	0.31	1.48	65.62
	1971-72	0.49	2.94	49.14
	1991-92	0.67	6.03	35.04
Maharashtra	1953-54	0.32	1.95	68.03
	1971-72	0.39	2.67	55.22
	1991-92	0.75	5.91	38.81
Orissa	1953-54	1.74	6.97	34.40
	1971-72	2.81	15.79	14.71
	1991-92	3.83	18.27	9.92
Punjab	1953-54	0.26	1.38	62.77
	1971-72	0.21	1.74	47.68
	1991-92	1.21	4.99	37.69
Rajasthan	1953-54	0.16	1.08	75.51
	1971-72	0.34	1.67	64.45
	1991-92	0.83	4.73	55.62
Tamil Nadu	1953-54	2.30	9.78	29.68
	1971-72	3.77	18.17	16.83
	1991-92	7.55	21.39	9.28
Uttar Pradesh	1953-54	1.90	8.90	26.50
	1971-72	2.85	12.80	16.51
	1991-92	5.39	19.57	10.90
West Bengal	1953-54	3.31	10.50	19.21
	1971-72	4.35	20.45	6.44
	1991-92	11.83	28.15	1.52
All India	1953-54	1.07	3.36	53.41
	1971-72	1.69	7.53	39.17
	1991-92	3.32	12.28	28.16

Source: Report on Landholdings (4 & 5) 8th Round 1953-54, NSS Report No. 66, Report on Some Aspects of Landholdings; 26th Round 1971-72, NSS Report No. 215. Report on Some Aspects of Operational Holdings (1); 48th Round, 1991-92, NSS Report No. 407.

Table 2: Lorenz Ratios for Operational Holdings Across States

States	1953-54	1971-72	1991-92
Andhra Pradesh	0.64	0.60	0.58
Assam	0.46	0.42	0.49
Bihar	0.57	0.55	0.64
Gujarat	0.58	0.54	0.59
Haryana	0.52	0.44	0.68
Karnataka	0.58	0.53	0.61
Kerala	0.64	0.61	0.64
Madhya Pradesh	0.56	0.53	0.56
Maharashtra	0.58	0.53	0.60
Orissa	0.58	0.50	0.51
Punjab	0.52	0.44	0.73
Rajasthan	0.57	0.62	0.61
Tamil Nadu	0.61	0.51	0.65
Uttar Pradesh	0.51	0.49	0.57
West Bengal	0.56	0.48	0.58
All-India	0.62	0.59	0.64

Sources for Data: i. Reports on Landholdings (3 &4); 8th Round 1953-54, NSS Report No. 36 and 66.ii. Report on Some Aspects of Landholdings; 26th Round 1971-72, NSS Report No. 215. iii. Report on Some Aspects of Household Ownership Landholdings (1); 48th Round, 1991-92, Report No. 399.

Table 3: Changing Incidence of Leasing in operations Under Different Terms of Tenancy: 1971-72 to 1991-92
(Per Cent of Operated area)

State	Year	Area			
		MR	FP	SP	OT
Andhra Pradesh	1971-72	2.56	1.28	3.19	2.00
	1981-82	0.81	0.69	0.55	4.18
	1991-92	2.47	2.56	2.77	1.76
Assam	1971-72	3.36	3.06	8.24	5.02
	1981-82	0.98	0.53	2.24	2.59
	1991-92	1.51	0.36	2.47	4.54
Bihar	1971-72	0.18	1.01	11.35	1.97
	1981-82	0.67	0.37	4.94	1.7
	1991-92	0.37	0.39	1.33	1.81
Gujarat	1971-72	0.89	0.4	1.55	1.08
	1981-82	0.1	0	0.19	1.66
	1991-92	1.33	0.06	0.79	1.16
Karnataka	1971-72	4.9	3	6.21	1.77
	1981-82	0.22	0.27	1.17	3.78
	1991-92	1.52	1.09	2.12	2.7
Kerala	1971-72	1.12	3.43	0.63	3.4
	1981-82	0.07	0	0.27	1.71
	1991-92	0.46	0	0.01	2.36
Madhya Pradesh	1971-72	1.12	0.64	2.16	3.54
	1981-82	0.06	0.04	0.99	2.46
	1991-92	0.96	1.35	1.57	2.42
Maharashtra	1971-72	1.54	0.85	2.55	1.21
	1981-82	0.57	0.12	2.53	1.98
	1991-92	1.98	0.36	1.14	1.99
Orissa	1971-72	1.01	1.8	5.68	4.96
	1981-82	0.51	0.8	4.16	4.43
	1991-92	1.86	0.44	4.82	2.35
Punjab	1971-72	7.97	3.27	12.58	4.19
	1981-82	6.77	0.74	6.41	2.15
	1991-92	9.26	3.45	2.13	4.01
Rajasthan	1971-72	0.52	0.56	1.36	2.83
	1981-82	0.15	0.06	0.93	3.17

	1991-92	0.79	1.01	1.21	2.18
Tamil Nadu	1971-72	1.98	3.74	5.52	1.82
	1981-82	2.11	2.17	3.99	2.66
	1991-92	3.53	2.23	1.76	3.37
Uttar Pradesh	1971-72	0.87	0.76	7.17	4.22
	1981-82	0.88	0.5	5.13	3.74
	1991-92	0.97	1.59	4.87	3.05
West Bengal	1971-72	0.16	0.48	17.34	0.75
	1981-82	0.35	1.47	6.85	2.54
	1991-92	0.9	1.21	4.83	3.46
All-India	1971-72	1.63	1.23	5.06	2.67
	1981-82	0.78	0.45	3	2.95
	1991-92	1.57	1.2	2.85	2.66

Note: MR - Fixed Money Rent; FP- Fixed Produce; SP - Share of Produce and OT - Other Terms

Source: NSS Reports 26th Round 1971-72, NSS Report No. 215 Report on Landholdings; 37th Round 1982, NSS Report No. 331. Report on Some Aspects of Operational Holdings; 48th Round 1991-92, Report No. 407

Table 4: Distribution of Leased-in Area in India by Terms on Leasing during 1990-91

States	(Per cent to total)				
	Fixed Money	Fixed Produce	Share of Produce	Unsufructuary Mortgage	Other Terms
Andhra Pradesh	42.9	35.7	7.1	0.0	0.0
Assam	21.6	20.0	17.6	4.0	36.8
Bihar	2.2	13.0	78.3	4.3	0.0
Gujarat	45.5	9.1	18.2	9.1	18.2
Haryana	50.5	6.8	36.9	3.9	1.9
Himachal Pradesh	13.0	4.3	21.7	13.0	47.8
Karnataka	-	-	-	-	-
Kerala	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0
Madya Pradesh	18.9	3.3	16.7	3.3	57.8
Maharashtra	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Orissa	9.3	9.3	68.5	0.0	9.3
Punjab	72.7	0.0	22.7	1.9	2.8
Rajasthan	54.2	10.2	25.4	1.7	5.8
Tamil Nadu	20.4	51.0	16.3	0.0	10.2
Uttar Pradesh	22.0	6.0	20.0	2.0	50.0
West Bengal	6.5	10.6	72.6	3.2	10.3
All India	29.0	13.5	37.7	3.3	16.5

Source: All India Report on Agricultural Census 1990-91, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, New Delhi (1998).

Table 5: Lorenz Ratios for Ownership Holdings Across States

States	1953-54	1971-72	1991-92
Andhra Pradesh	0.80	0.73	0.71
Assam	0.74	0.62	0.56
Bihar	0.70	0.62	0.69
Gujarat	0.72	0.69	0.71
Haryana	0.76	0.68	0.68
Karnataka	0.72	0.66	0.66
Kerala	0.79	0.67	0.67
Madhya Pradesh	0.71	0.62	0.65
Maharashtra	0.74	0.68	0.71
Orissa	0.68	0.63	0.66
Punjab	0.76	0.78	0.76
Rajasthan	0.69	0.61	0.65
Tamil Nadu	0.79	0.74	0.77
Uttar Pradesh	0.64	0.63	0.63
West Bengal	0.73	0.66	0.67
All-India	0.75	0.71	0.71

Sources for Data: As in table 1 above.

Table 6: Trends in the Distribution of Ownership Holdings: 1953-54 to 1991-92

States	Year	Land-less	Sub-Marginal Holdings		Marginal Holdings		Small Holdings		Medium Holdings		Large Holdings	
			Holds	Area	Holds	Area	Holds	Area	Holds	Area	Holds	Area
Andhra Pradesh	1953-54	30.33	27.74	1.87	13.51	6.15	10.87	12.47	12.52	29.45	5.03	50.06
	1961-62	6.84	41.54	1.49	17.93	6.67	11.46	9.69	15.06	29.51	7.17	52.64
	1971-72	6.95	40.64	2.23	17.70	7.69	13.65	13.16	15.85	36.22	5.21	40.70
	1981-82	11.93	37.42	2.15	18.14	9.12	14.03	15.28	14.19	35.70	4.29	37.75
	1991-92	11.85	43.97	4.43	20.59	16.87	12.35	22.44	9.56	36.35	1.48	19.91
Assam	1953-54	41.58	12.23	1.84	10.78	6.14	17.01	21.03	16.09	43.94	2.31	27.05
	1961-62	26.46	20.81	3.80	15.11	11.69	24.39	33.45	12.52	44.85	0.71	6.21
	1971-72	24.99	21.14	3.84	23.44	18.31	18.20	30.23	11.32	39.29	0.91	8.33
	1981-82	7.53	34.18	5.71	24.99	18.33	22.01	34.80	10.67	34.98	0.63	5.68
	1991-92	13.39	31.27	7.21	33.03	30.84	14.82	29.07	7.12	28.68	0.37	4.20
Bihar	1953-54	16.56	34.66	3.54	16.04	9.12	14.86	18.03	14.76	41.88	3.12	27.43
	1961-62	8.63	42.48	3.74	16.98	10.00	15.83	20.25	13.41	40.69	2.67	25.32
	1971-72	4.34	48.64	4.75	18.73	13.45	15.11	23.43	11.47	40.35	1.71	18.02
	1981-82	4.10	50.83	6.21	21.71	17.71	12.42	22.91	9.59	37.79	1.35	15.34
	1991-92	8.58	51.53	8.57	20.45	20.01	11.10	23.84	7.38	34.50	0.96	13.08
Gujarat	1953-54	30.48	12.33	0.27	7.65	1.38	8.66	3.32	19.62	19.69	21.26	75.34
	1961-62	14.74	23.02	0.46	11.05	2.69	11.05	5.66	24.60	30.61	15.34	60.58
	1971-72	13.44	25.80	0.70	13.02	3.83	15.24	9.94	21.37	32.73	11.13	52.80
	1981-82	16.83	23.95	0.72	16.48	5.93	13.61	10.78	20.92	38.75	8.21	43.82
	1991-92	16.33	30.67	1.56	16.34	7.99	15.18	15.44	17.09	41.80	4.39	33.21
Haryana	1953-54	36.86	13.90	0.59	8.84	2.69	9.28	6.23	20.32	31.67	10.80	58.52
	1961-62	12.30	40.91	1.02	8.25	2.86	9.21	6.99	19.43	34.88	9.90	54.25
	1971-72	9.09	48.55	0.92	8.37	3.63	8.61	8.22	18.57	42.12	6.81	45.11
	1981-82	6.30	46.15	0.86	10.10	4.45	12.42	12.06	18.70	42.34	6.33	40.29
	1991-92	3.69	39.49	0.85	15.86	7.11	13.48	13.43	22.86	49.39	4.63	29.22
Karnata-ka	1953-54	22.84	17.90	0.55	11.83	3.22	13.84	7.83	22.47	30.60	11.12	57.80
	1961-62	18.64	16.90	0.55	10.99	2.94	12.93	7.30	29.18	38.64	11.36	50.57
	1971-72	12.46	23.62	0.66	14.87	5.08	16.27	11.81	24.69	39.98	8.09	42.47
	1981-82	13.70	26.03	0.87	14.68	5.35	16.82	13.56	21.82	38.53	6.95	41.69
	1991-92	9.98	27.70	1.54	21.04	9.51	18.27	18.35	19.31	42.66	3.70	27.94
Kerala	1953-54	36.27	35.56	9.64	15.12	16.62	6.50	15.80	5.32	28.73	1.23	29.21
	1961-62	30.90	41.49	12.25	14.77	18.13	7.38	24.20	4.61	27.53	0.85	21.89
	1971-72	15.74	56.49	16.80	16.46	24.07	7.32	24.32	3.68	27.72	0.31	7.09
	1981-82	12.76	63.49	20.95	14.41	24.78	6.07	23.51	3.04	25.84	0.23	4.92
	1991-92	8.41	70.30	25.38	13.95	29.13	5.32	24.19	1.89	17.96	0.13	3.35
Madhya Pradesh	1953-54	29.82	9.60	0.37	8.67	1.93	11.91	5.62	25.20	29.23	14.80	62.85
	1961-62	9.14	19.89	0.43	11.39	2.61	15.42	7.46	29.42	34.26	14.74	55.24
	1971-72	9.58	19.21	0.48	11.46	2.86	16.96	9.16	30.60	38.89	12.15	48.61
	1981-82	14.39	20.24	0.67	14.12	4.50	16.24	11.48	26.89	41.70	8.12	41.65
	1991-92	15.19	19.31	0.80	17.88	6.81	19.19	15.49	22.38	42.08	6.04	34.84
Mahara-shtra	1953-54	28.56	14.33	0.43	9.87	2.30	10.98	5.46	22.22	27.13	14.04	64.68
	1961-62	16.03	23.88	0.40	10.35	2.40	11.41	5.50	22.58	27.52	15.75	64.18
	1971-72	15.85	20.17	0.66	12.34	3.03	14.93	8.58	24.65	34.23	12.06	53.70
	1981-82	21.24	21.53	0.68	12.11	3.97	14.96	10.90	21.34	36.71	8.82	47.74
	1991-92	19.56	25.33	0.84	14.58	6.18	14.19	12.61	20.62	41.85	5.72	38.52
Orissa	1953-54	12.29	31.44	2.37	16.78	7.45	17.99	18.15	17.26	39.21	4.24	32.82
	1961-62	7.84	36.64	2.16	18.19	9.23	17.24	19.19	17.06	42.41	3.03	27.01
	1971-72	10.57	34.27	3.83	24.10	16.82	18.08	26.95	11.49	38.14	1.49	14.46
	1981-82	7.66	32.26	3.24	26.04	16.64	20.83	29.7327.	11.67	36.40	1.44	13.99
	1991-92	13.83	37.23	5.50	24.66	20.87	14.42	16	8.90	35.57	0.96	10.90
Punjab	1953-54	36.86	13.90	0.59	8.84	2.69	9.28	6.23	20.32	31.67	10.80	58.52
	1961-62	12.30	40.91	1.02	8.25	2.86	9.21	6.99	19.43	34.88	9.90	54.25
	1971-72	9.09	48.55	0.92	8.37	3.63	8.61	8.22	18.57	42.12	6.81	45.11
	1981-82	6.30	46.15	0.86	10.10	4.45	12.42	12.06	18.70	42.34	6.33	40.29
	1991-92	5.86	54.80	1.87	8.96	5.31	9.98	12.35	16.53	48.86	3.87	31.61
Rajas-than	1953-54	24.85	5.99	0.21	8.39	1.26	12.70	4.02	25.55	20.36	22.52	74.15
	1961-62	10.95	13.79	0.21	9.85	1.58	14.29	4.88	29.78	24.36	21.34	69.02
	1971-72	2.91	12.38	0.24	11.67	1.78	19.87	6.77	32.22	26.15	20.95	65.06
	1981-82	8.13	14.07	0.41	14.87	3.23	16.73	7.29	31.58	34.12	14.62	54.95
	1991-92	6.43	20.21	0.78	17.86	4.64	18.53	10.04	25.14	32.21	11.83	52.33
Tamil Nadu	1953-54	33.56	29.72	3.34	13.90	10.22	10.12	16.36	10.28	36.16	2.42	33.92
	1961-62	24.20	37.54	4.25	16.68	15.75	11.07	21.67	9.09	39.07	1.42	19.26
	1971-72	17.01	43.52	4.45	17.87	15.77	11.39	21.84	8.76	38.28	1.45	19.74
	1981-82	19.13	47.85	6.50	14.86	17.08	10.89	27.24	6.45	35.83	0.82	13.35
	1991-92	17.93	53.04	8.46	16.16	24.82	8.01	26.24	4.46	31.56	0.40	8.92
Uttar Pradesh	1953-54	9.36	30.32	2.38	20.34	10.13	18.40	19.39	18.12	42.97	3.46	25.13
	1961-62	2.77	33.90	2.45	20.78	9.88	21.39	22.21	17.82	41.87	3.34	23.59
	1971-72	4.55	38.83	3.91	22.20	13.57	18.60	24.66	13.79	41.08	2.03	16.78
	1981-82	4.85	38.71	3.62	24.40	15.73	17.38	24.38	12.92	40.92	1.74	15.35
	1991-92	4.90	42.77	6.53	26.71	20.89	14.73	24.88	9.91	37.25	0.98	10.45

West Bengal	1953-54	20.54	36.29	4.29	16.64	11.61	12.61	18.60	11.32	39.50	2.60	26.00
	1961-62	12.56	38.58	4.11	18.11	13.44	16.81	25.97	12.41	42.22	1.53	14.26
	1971-72	9.78	46.74	6.83	21.10	20.45	12.65	25.68	9.01	39.27	0.72	7.77
	1981-82	17.21	47.03	9.42	17.36	20.91	11.50	28.77	6.62	36.70	0.28	4.20
	1991-92	10.97	54.12	12.57	20.79	28.72	9.48	28.11	4.50	28.55	0.14	2.05
All India	1953-54	23.09	14.18	1.36	13.98	4.86	13.49	10.09	17.54	31.18	7.72	52.51
	1961-62	11.69	32.56	1.59	15.86	6.00	15.09	12.40	17.96	34.51	6.84	45.50
	1971-72	9.64	35.24	2.07	17.74	7.69	15.49	14.67	16.56	36.49	5.33	39.08
	1981-82	11.33	36.88	2.75	18.43	9.47	14.70	16.49	14.68	38.03	3.98	33.26
	1991-92	11.24	40.11	3.80	20.52	13.13	13.42	18.59	12.09	37.81	2.62	26.67

Source: Report on Landholdings (3 & 4); 8th Round 1953-54, NSS Report No. 36; Report on Some Aspects Landholdings; 17th Round 1961-62, NSS Report No. 144. Report on Some Aspects of Landholdings; 26th Round 1971-72, NSS Report No. 215. Report on Some Aspects of Household Ownership Landholdings (1); 37th Round, 1981-82 NSS Report No. 330. Report on Some Aspects of Household Ownership Landholdings (1); 48th Round, 1991-92 NSS Report No. 399.